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THE PROPOSITION.

The International Yukon Polar Institute was formed at Dawson, Yukon Territory, and had a membership at the time its constitution was signed, of over five hundred, including the highest federal and territorial officials, leading business men, and all the foreign consuls of this territory. Among its honorary members are the noted Arctic and Antarctic explorers, and it is already in correspondence with geographical bodies and scientists who are interested in Polar expeditions.

The Institute has for its object the exploration and development of the Polar Regions on scientific, commercial and industrial lines, appreciating the fact that great wealth has lain dormant in the frigid zone for centuries, and that but a very small portion of this wealth has yet been retrieved.

Believing that the ends of exploration and development will be best attained by a systematic pursuit of the work by people vitally interested in the frozen regions, the Yukoners deem themselves peculiarly fitted and situated to initiate and carry forward such work, and to this end have formally organized an

Institute which will seek the assistance of the scientists of all nations willing to co-operate in this large undertaking.

The immediate purpose of the organization is to send to the North Pole during the year 1906 an expedition of experienced and trained Yukoners and Alaskans, who, by virtue of their familiarity with Arctic conditions, are undoubtedly the most likely candidates in the race for the goal of centuries.

But this expedition is far from being all that is contemplated in the purposes of the Institute. Other expeditions will be necessary to learn all there is to be learned regarding the physical conditions and commercial and industrial advantages in the Arctic. The Antarctic also, being a country of similar frost-locked conditions, is looked upon as another legitimate field of exploitation for people of the same spirit and experience in frigid lands.

It is the hope of the Institute to bring to the attention of men in responsible positions in the governments of the world, and to the great scientific societies, the benefits that should be derived from a thorough knowledge of these regions, and through access to them, and thereby secure their endorsement, sympathy, support and co-operation in the work. Such societies will be asked to appoint special committees to correspond with the Yukon Institute and to exchange data and contemplated

plans of operation in Polar regions on the lines mentioned. The knowledge thus far gained by the intrepid explorers, whalers and others who have sailed the Arctic seas, has been gathered at great expense and on no general world-wide plan of co-operation, and has been compiled in detached and often unsatisfactory form instead of being readily exchangeable for the benefit of explorers to come. It is the hope of the Institute to create a channel for the ready transmission of such information to the hands of those who are determined to make early efforts to open the Arctic regions on more practical lines than ever heretofore attempted.

With the discovery of gold in the sub-Arctic Klondike, the first serious attention was directed to gold mining in such regions. Since then the world has been enriched by gold from these frigid belts to the value of two hundred millions. It is believed that gold and minerals exist even on the islands of the Polar seas, and that the opening of those lands to the prospector may be of infinite value to the world in time to come.

The Yukoner has demonstrated the practicability of life and work in the Arctic regions, and now a new empire is ready to be opened up. On commercial lines the Institute deems whaling, walrus hunting and the capturing of the fur-bearing animals of the land among enticing objects of pursuit for profit.

Already millions have been realized from the Arctic on each of these lines, and the field is probably without limitation. Incidental to all these is the sale of merchandise to the natives of these regions and the whites who may be induced to enter this field of activity.

On scientific lines the Institute sees a vast field for research in the study of oceanic currents, the movement of ice floes, the depth of the ice in the Polar seas, full topographical conditions of the whole frigid zones; and the pursuit of science in geology, zoology, botany, astronomy and other important divisions on which very little reliable data has yet been obtained.

All these interests, scientific and commercial, will be served by expeditions into these countries under the leadership of trained men and trained dog teams; men accustomed to journeys of from five hundred to two thousand miles in the depths of Arctic winters, carrying all their necessities with them; men who have made such travel their trade and who have proved by years of experience what is the best food, the best clothing and the best equipment. These men, whom we have in Yukon and Alaska, have dispelled the terrors of life in the Arctic; have proven that travel can be done in this whole north land in winter better than in summer; have proven that frozen ground is easier to mine than unfrozen, and have redeemed already a large part of these

frozen solitudes and made them productive and habitable.

In the first expedition now being planned by the International Yukon Polar Institute, it is the intention to fit out and equip an expedition that is bound to reach the goal, and the Institute has full confidence of this result chiefly because :

First—In charge of men familiar with Arctic travel; men who have made much longer trips over fully as rough country and with a much lower temperature to contend with ;

Second—Being equipped with known and tried apparatus which has served Yukoners in the most trying of their trips and is a known quantity.

Third—Because of knowing, by virtue of Arctic life and training, the weak points which have caused much of the failure of former expeditions and how to avoid them.

As all the world is so deeply interested in Polar research, and as no project has ever been put forward with such demonstrations of what may reasonably assure ultimate success, the Institute has every confidence in calling upon governments, scientific associations and scientists all over the world to give to it a hearty moral and financial support.

For the present it is proposed that an expedition leave early in June, 1906, and proceed to Grant Land. There the party will be left by the steamer and

when the Polar plateau is frozen the dash to the Pole and to Franz Joseph Land, will be made. An auxiliary party will proceed with the Polar party one hundred miles or so across the plateau, to assist in transportation, and then return to the observatory on Grant Land and explore that territory and adjacent islands.

They will delve into the frozen earth (and they are the only men who understand the working of frozen ground), unearthing its treasures in minerals, and in fossils showing the vegetation of prehistoric times. The next summer a steamer will return them to their homes.

For the future there are many points in the growth of such an Institute. Wireless telegraphy may be employed from Dawson to Herschel Island, thence to other islands and to the observatory on Grant Land, keeping the whole world in touch with the operations of the Institute. Special ships may be built on lines dictated by actual experience, to follow in the ice flow from the Pacific side to the Atlantic, and, in fact, there are no limitations to the increased usefulness of such an institution year by year in regard to the exploration and exploitation of the present unknown lands of the two Poles.

THE YUKON WORLD PRESS.



DAWSON, 1905.



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